

THE
RIVAL QUEENS;
OR,
ALEXANDER THE GREAT.
A TRAGEDY.

WRITTEN BY
NATHANIEL LEE, GENT.

TAKEN FROM
THE MANAGER'S BOOK,
AT THE
Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden.

L O N D O N:

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Be M. M. M. M.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.
COVENT GARDEN.

M E N.

Alexander,	—	Mr. Pope.
Clytus,	—	Mr. Aickin.
Lyfimachus,	—	Mr. Farren.
Hephestion,	—	Mr. Davies.
Cassander,	—	Mr. Fearon,
Polyperchon,	—	Mr. Macready.

W O M E N.

Syfigambis,	—	Mrs. Platt.
Statira,	—	Miss Brunton.
Roxana,	—	Mrs. Pope.
Parifatis,	—	Mrs. Inchbald.



THE RIVAL QUEENS, &c.

ACT I. SCENE, *the gardens of Semiramis. Enter Hephæstion and Lyfimachus fighting. Clytus parting them.*

Clyt. **W**HAT are you madmen? This a time for quarrel?

Put up I say—Or, by the gods that form'd me,
He who refuses makes a foe of Clytus.

Lyf. I have his sword.

Clyt. But must not have his life.

Lyf. Must not! old Clytus!

Clyt. Hair-brain'd boy, you must not.

Heph. Lend me thy sword, thou father of the war,
Thou far-fam'd guard of Alexander's life:

Curse on this weak unexecuting arm!

Lend it, old Clytus, to redeem my fame;

Lyfimachus is brave, and else will scorn me.

Lyf. There, take thy sword; and, since thou'rt bent
on death,

Know, 'tis thy glory that thou dy'st by me.

Clyt. Stay thee, Lyfimachus; Hephæstion, hold;

I bar you both; my body interpos'd.

Now let me see which of you dares to strike.

By Jove you'veurr'd the old man!—that rash arm

That first advances, moves against the gods

And our great king, whose deputy I stand.

Lyf. Some prop'rer time must terminate our quarrel.

Heph. And cure the bleeding wounds my honour bears.

Clyt. Some prop'rer time! 'tis false—no hour is proper;

No time should see a brave man do amiss.

Say, what's the noble cause of all this madness?

What vast ambition blows the dangerous fire?

Why a vain, smiling, whining, cozz'ning woman.

By all my triumphs! in the heat of youth,

When towns were sack'd, and beauties prostrate lay,

When my blood boil'd, and nature work'd me high,

Clytus ne'er bow'd his body to such shame;

I knew 'em, and despis'd their cobweb arts.

The whole sex is not worth a soldier's thought.

Lyf. Our cause of quarrel may to thee seem light;
But know, a less has set the world in arms.

Clyt. Yes, Troy they tell us by a woman fell;

Curse on the sex, they are the bane of virtue!

Death! I'd rather this right arm were lost,

Than that the king should hear of your imprudence—

What! on a day set apart for triumph!

Lyf. We were indeed to blame.

Clyt. The memorable day!

When our hot master, whose impatient soul
Outrides the sun, and sighs for other worlds
To spread his conquests, and diffuse his glory;
Now bids the trumpet for a while be silent,
And plays with monarchs, whom he us'd to drive;
Shall we by broils awake him into rage,
And rouse the lion, that has ceas'd to roar?

Lyf. Clytus thou'rt right—put up thy sword Heph-
estion:

Had passion not eclips'd the light of reason,
Untold we might this consequence have seen.

Heph. Why has not reason power to conquer love?
Why are we thus enslav'd!

Clyt. Because unman'd;

Because ye follow Alexander's steps.
Heav'n's! that a face should thus bewitch his soul,
And ruin all that's great and godlike in it.
Task be my bane, yet the old man must talk;
Not so he lov'd when he at Iffus fought,
And join'd in mighty combat with Darius,
Whom from his chariot flinging all with gems,
He hurl'd to earth, and catch'd th' imperial crown.
'Twas not the shaft of love perform'd that feat;
He knew no Cupids then. Now mark the change!
A brace of rival queens embroil the court;
And, while each hand is thus employ'd in beauty,
Where has he room for glory?

Heph. In his heart.

Clyt. Well said, young minion!—I indeed forgot
To whom I spoke—but Syfigambis comes.
Now is your time, for with her comes an idol
That claims your homage—I'll attend the kind. [*Exit.*]

Enter Syfigambis, with a letter, and Parisatis.

Syf. Why will you wound me with your fond com-
plaints,

And urge a suit that I can never grant?
You know, my child, 'tis Alexander's will;
Here, he demands you for his lov'd Hephæstion.
To disobey him might enflame his wrath,
And plunge our house in ruins yet unknown.

Par. To soothe this god, and charm him into temper,
Is there no victim, none but Parisatis?
Must I be doom'd to wretchedness and woe,

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That others may enjoy the conqu'ror's smiles?

Oh! if you ever lov'd my roval father——

And sure you did, your gushing tears proclaim it—

If still his name be dear, have pity on me!

He would not thus have forc'd me to despair;

Indeed he would not.——Had I begg'd him thus,

He would have heard me, e'er my heart was broke.

Syl. When will my sufferings end! O when ye gods!

For sixty rolling years, my soul has stood

The dread vicissitudes of fate unmov'd:

I thought 'em your decrees, and therefore yielded.

But this last trial, as it springs from folly,

Exceeds my suff'rance, and I must complain.

Lys. When Syfigambis mourns, no common woe

Can be the cause—'tis misery indeed.

Yet pardon, mighty queen, a wretched prince,

Who thus presumes to plead the cause of love.

Beyond my life, beyond the world [*Knocking.*] I prize

Fair Parisatis—Hear me, I conjure you!

Reject not mine—grant me but equal leave

To serve the princess, and let love decide.

Heph. A blessing like the beauteous Parisatis

Whole years of service, and the world's wide empire,

With all the blood that circles in our veins,

Can never merit; therefore in my favour

I begg'd the king to interpose his int'rest;

Therefore, I begg'd your majesty's assistance;

Your word is past, and all my hopes rest on't.

Lys. [*Rising.*] Perish such hopes! for love's a gen'-
rous passion

Which seeks the happiness of her we love,

Beyond th' enjoyment of our own desires,

Nor kings nor parents here have ought to do.

Love owns no influence, and disdains controul;

Let 'em stand neuter—'tis all I ask.

Heph. Such arrogance did Alexander woo,

Would lose him all the conquests he has won.

Lys. To talk of conquests well becomes the man

Whose life and sword are but his rival's gift.

Syl. It grieves me, brave Lysimachus, to find

My power fall short of my desires to serve you;

You know Hephestion first declar'd his love,

And 'tis as true, I promised him my aid.

Your glorious king, his mighty advocate,

Became himself an humble suppliant for him.

Forget her, prince, and triumph o'er your passion:
A conquest worthy of a soul like thine.

Lys. Forget her! madam: soon-r shall the sun
Forget to shine, and tumble from his sphere.
Farewel, great queen—my honour now demands
That Alexander should himself explain
That wond'rous merit which exalts his fav'rite,
And casts *Lyfimachus* at such a distance. [*Exit Lys.*]

Lys. In this wild transport of ungovern'd passion
Too far I fear he will incense the king.
Is Alexander yet, my lord, arrived?

Heph. Madam, I know not, but *Cassander* comes,
He may perhaps inform us.

Sys. I would shun him.
Something there is, I know not why, that shocks me,
Something my nature shrinks at, when I see him. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Cassander.

Cas. The face of day now blushes scarlet deep:
Now blackens into night. The low'ring sun,
As if the dreadful business he foreknew,
Drives heavily his sable chariot on.
How fierce it lightens! how it thunders round me!
All nature seems alarm'd for Alexander.
Why be it so. Her pangs proclaim my triumph.
My soul's first wishes are to startle fate,
And strike amazement thro' the host of Heav'n.
A mad Chaldean with a flaming torch,
Came to my bed last night, and bellowing o'er me,
Well had it been, he cry'd, for Babylon,
If curst *Cassander* never had been born.

Enter Theffalus with a packet.

How now, dear *Theffalus*, what packet's that?

Thef. From Macedon, a trusty slave just brought it.
Your father chides us for our cold delay;
He says *Craterus*, by the king's appointment,
Comes, in his room, to govern Macedon,
Which nothing but the tyrant's death can hinder.
Therefore he bids us boldly strike,
Or quit our purpose, and confess our fears.

Cas. Is not his fate resolved? this night he dies;
And thus my father but forestalls my purpose.
How am I slow then? if I rode on thunder,
Wing'd as the light'ning, it would ask some moments
Ere I could blast the growth of this Colossus.

Thef.

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Thes. Mark where the haughty Polyperchon comes!
Some new affront by Alexander given,
Swells in his heart, and stings him into madness.

Cas. Now, now's our time; he must, he shall be our's;
His haughty soul will kindle at his wrongs,
Blaze into rage, and glory in revenge.

Enter Polyperchon.

Poly. Still as I pass, fresh murmurs fill my ears; |
All talk of wrongs, and mutter their complaints.
Poor soul-less reptiles!—Their revenge expires
In idle threats.—The fortitude of cowards!
Their province is to talk! 'tis mine to act,
And shew this tyrant, when he dared to wrong me,
He wrong'd a man whose attribute is vengeance.

Cas. All nations bow their heads with servile bondage,
And kiss the feet of this exalted man.
The name, the shout, the blast from ev'ry mouth
Is Alexander! Alexander thuns
The list'ning ear, and drowns the voice of Heav'n.
The earth's commanders fawn like crouching spaniels;
And if this hunter of the barbarous world,
But wind himself a god, all echo him
With universal cry.

Poly. I fawn, or echo him,
Alexander, no! my soul disdains the thought!
Let eastern slaves or prostituted Greeks
Crouch at his feet, or tremble if he frown.
When Polyperchon can descend so low,
False to that honour, which thro' fields of death,
I still have courted, where the fight was fiercest,
Be scorn my portion, infamy my lot.

Thes. The king may doom me to a thousand tortures,
Ply me with fire, and rack me like Philotas,
Ere I shall stoop to idolize his pride,

Cas. Not Aristander, had he rais'd all hell,
Cou'd more have shock'd my soul, than thou hast done,
By the bare mention of Philotas' murder.
O Polyperchon! how shall I describe it!
Did not your eyes rain blood to see the hero?
Did not the spirits burst with former'd vengeance,
To see thy noble fellow-warrior tortur'd!
Yet, without groaning, or a tear, endure
The torment of the damn'd? O death to think it!
We saw him bruis'd, we saw his bones laid bare;
His veins wide lanc'd, and the poor quiv'ring flesh

With

With fiery pinces from his bosom torn.

Till all beheld where the great heart lay panting.

Poly. Yet all like statues stood !—cold lifeless statues
As if the sight had froze us into marble.

When, with collected rage, we should have flown
To instant vengeance on the ruthless cause,
And plung'd a thousand daggers in his heart.

Cas. At our last banquet, when the bowl had gone
The giddy round, and wine inflam'd my spirits ;
I saw Craterus and Hephestion enter
In Persian robes ; to Alexander's health
They largely drank ; and falling at his feet
With impious adoration thus address'd
Their idol god. Hail son of thund'ring Jove !
Hail first of kings ! young Ammon live for ever !
Then kiss'd the earth ; on which I laugh'd aloud,
And scoffing, ask'd 'em, why they kiss'd no harder.
Whereon the tyrant, starting from his throne,
Spurn'd me to earth, and stamping on my neck,
Learn thou to kiss it, was his fierce reply ;
While with his foot he press'd me to the earth,
Till I lay weltring in a foam of blood.

Poly. Thus when I mock'd the Persians that ador'd
him.

He struck me on the face, swung me around,
And bid his guards chastize me like a slave.
But if he 'scape my vengeance, may he live,
Great as that god whose name he thus prophanes,
And like a slave may I again be beaten,
Scoff'd as I pass, and branded for a coward.

Cas. There spoke the spirit of Calisthenes :
Remember, he's a man, his flesh as penetrable
As any girl's, and wounded too as soon ;
To give him death no thunders are requir'd.
Struck by a stone young Jupiter has fall'n,
A sword has pierc'd him, and the blood has follow'd ;
Nay, we have seen an hundred common ailments
Bring this immortal to the gates of death.

Pol. O let us not delay the glorious business !
Our wrongs are great, and honour calls for vengeance.
Are your hearts firm ?

Thes. A Heav'n or hell can make 'em.

Pol. Take then my hand, and if you doubt my truth,
Rip up my breast, and lay my heart upon it.

Cas. While thus we join our hands and hearts together.
Remember

Remember Hermolaus and he hush'd.

Pol. Hush'd as the eve before an hurricane,
Or baleful planets when they shed their poisons.

Cas. This day exulting Babylon receives
The mighty robber—with him comes Roxana,
Fierce haughty fair! On his return from India,
Artful she met him in the height of triumph,
And by a thousand wiles at Susa kept him,
In all the luxury of eastern revels.

Pol. How bore Statira his revolted love?
For, if I err not, 'ere the king espous'd her,
She made him promise to renounce Roxana.

Thef. No words can paint the anguish it occasion'd;
Ev'n Syfigambis wept, while the wrong'd queen
Struck to the heart, fell lifeless on the ground.

Cas. When the first tumult of her grief was laid,
I sought to fire her into wild revenge;
And to that end, with all the art I could,
Describ'd his passion for the bright Roxana.
But tho' I could not to my wish inflame her,
Thus far at least her jealousy will help;
She'll give him troubles that perhaps may end him,
And set the court in universal uproar.
But see she comes. Our plots begin to ripen,
Now change the vizor, every one disperse,
And, with a face of friendship, meet the king. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Syfigambis, Statira, and Parisatis.

Sta. O for a dagger, a draught of poison, flames!
Swell heart, break, break thou wretched stubborn thing.
Now, by the sacred fire, I'll not be held:
Pray give me leave to walk,

Syf. Unhappy Parisatis!
Is there no reverence to my person due?
Trust me, Statira, had thy father liv'd,
Darius wou'd have heard me.

Sta. O he's false.
This glorious man, this wonder of the world,
Is to his love, and ev'ry god foresworn.
O I have heard him breathe such ardent vows,
Out-weep the morning with his dewy eyes,
And sigh and swear the list'ning stars away.

Syf. Believe not rumour, 'tis impossible.
Thy Alexander is renown'd for truth;
Above deceit—

Sta. Away, and let me die.

'Twas

'Twas but my fondness, 'twas my easy nature
 Wou'd have excus'd him—but away such weakness.
 Are not his falsehoods, and Statira's wrongs,
 A subject canvass'd in the mouth of millions?
 The babbling world can talk of nothing else.
 Why, Alexander, why would'st thou deceive me!
 Have I not lov'd thee, cruel as thou art!
 Have I not kiss'd thy wounds with dying fondness,
 Bath'd 'em in tears, and bound 'em with my hair:
 Whole nights I've sat and watch'd thee as a child,
 Lull'd thy fierce pains, and sung thee to repose.

Par. If man can thus renounce the solemn ties
 Of sacred love, fidelity and truth,
 Who wou'd regard his vows?

Sta. Regard his vows, the monster, traitor! Oh!
 I will forsake the haunts of men, converse [ness;
 No more with aught that's human; dwell with dark-
 For since the sight of him is now unwelcome,
 What has the world to give Statira joy?
 Yet I must tell thee, perjur'd as he is,
 Not the soft breezes of the genial spring,
 The fragrant violet, or op'ning rose,
 Are half so sweet as Alexander's breath:
 Then he will talk—good gods how he will talk!
 He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
 Vows with such passion, and swears with such a grace,
 That it is heav'n to be deluded by him.

Sys. Her sorrows must have way. Alas, my child!

Sta. Roxana then enjoys my perjur'd love;
 Roxana clasps my monarch in her arms,
 Doats on my conqu'ror, my dear lord, my king.
 Oh 'tis too much! by Heav'n I cannot bear it!
 I'll die, or rid me of the burning torture.
 Hear me, bright god of day, hear ev'ry god.

Sys. Take heed, Statira; weigh it well, my child,
 Ere desperate love enforces you to swear.

Sta. O fear not that, already have I weigh'd it;
 And in the presence here of Heav'n and you,
 Renounce all converse with perfidious man.
 Farewel ye cozeners of our easy sex!
 And thou the falsest of the faithless kind.
 Farewel for ever! farewel! farewel!
 If I but mention him the tears will flow.
 How could'st thou, cruel, wrong a heart like mine,
 Thus fond, thus doating, ev'n to madness, on thee!

Sy. Clear up thy griefs, Alexander comes,
Triumphant in the spoils of conquer'd India;
This day the hero enters Babylon.

Sta. Why let him come; all eyes will gaze with rap-
All hearts will joy to see the victor pass, [ture;
All but the wretched, the forlorn Statira.

Sy. Wilt thou not see him then?

Par. Not see the king!

Sta. I swear, and Heav'n be witness to my vow,
Never from this sad hour, never to see,
Nor speak, no, nor, if possible, to think
Of Alexander more: this is my vow,
And when I break it——

Sy. Do not ruin all!

Sta. May I again be perjur'd and deluded!
May furies rend my heart! may light'nings blast me!

Sy. Recall, my child, the dreadful imprecation.

Sta. No, I will publish it through all the court;

Then to the bow'rs of great Semiramis

Retire for ever from the treacherous world.

There from man's sight will I conceal my woes,

And seek in solitude a calm repose:

Nor pray'rs, nor tears, shall my resolves controul,

Nor love itself, that tyrant of the soul. [Exeunt.

A C T II. *Enter Cassander and Polyperchon.*

Cas. **H**E comes, the headlong Alexander comes;
The gods forbid him Babylon in vain;
In vain do prodigies foretell his fall,
Attended by a throng of scepter'd slaves,
This rapid conqueror of the ravag'd globe,
Makes his appearance, and defies the danger.

Pol. Why all this noise—ye partial powers declare—
These starts of nature, at a tyrant's doom?
Is Alexander of such wond'rous moment,
That Heav'n should feel the wild alarms of fear,
And fate itself becomes a babble for him?

Cas. Cas'd in the very arm we saw him wear,
The spirit of his father haunts the court,
In all the majesty of solemn sorrow.
The awful spectre fix'd his eyes upon me,
Wav'd his pale hand—and, threatful shook his head,
Groan'd out, forbear, and vanish'd from my view.
A fear till then unknown possess'd my soul,
And sick'ning nature trembled at the sight!

Pol.

Pol. Why should you tremble?—Had the yawning
Laid all the tortures of the dam'd before me, [earth
My soul, unshaken in her firm resolve,
Wou'd brave those tortures, and pursue the tyrant.

Cas. Yes, Polyperchon, he this night shall die;
Our plots, in spite of prodigies, advance;
Success attends us.—Oh, it jys my soul!
To deal destruction like the hand of Heav'n,
Felt while unseen.

Pol. Ay there's the thing, Cassander.
Fear and distraction thro' the court prevail;
The Persians all dissatisfied appear;
Loudly they murmur at Statira's wrongs,
And fiercely censure Alexander's falsehood.

Cas. I know he loves Statira more than life;
And when he hears the solemn vow she made,
The oath that bars her from his sight for ever,
Remorse and horror will at once invade him,
Rend his wreck'd soul, and rush him into madness.

Pol. Of that anon—the court begins to thicken;
From ev'ry province of the wide-spread earth,
Ambassadors in Babylon are met;
As if mankind had previously agreed
To compliment the tyrant's boundless pride,
And hold a solemn synod of the world,
Where Alexander like a god should dictate.

Cas. We must away, or mingle with the crowd,
Adore this god till apt occasion calls,
To make him what he would be thought—immortal.

[*Exeunt*

A symphony of warlike music.

Enter Clytus and Aristander, in his robes.

Aris. Haste, reverend Clytus, haste and stop the king.

Clyt. Already he is enter'd, and the throng
Of princes that surround him is so great,
They keep at distance all that would approach.

Aris. Were he encircled by the gods themselves,
I must be heard, for death awaits his stay.

Clyt. Place yourself here then, for behold he comes.

*Enter Alexander in a triumphal car, drawn by black slaves
Trophies and warlike ensigns in procession before him.
Clytus, Hephestion, Lyfimachus, Aristander, captives
guards, and attendants.*

See the conqu'ring hero comes,
Sound the trumpets, beat the drums;

Sport

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Sports prepare, the laurel bring,
Songs of triumph to him sing.

See the godlike youth advance,
Breathe the flute, and lead the dance;
Myrtle wreaths, and roses twine,
To deck the hero's brow divine.

Heph. Hail, son of Jove! great Alexander hail!

Al. Rise all; and thou my second self, my friend,
O my Hephæstion! raise thee from the earth!
Come to my arms, and hide thee in my heart;
Nearer, yet nearer, else thou lov'st me not.

Heph. Not love my king! bear witness all ye powers,
And let your thunder nail me to the centre,
If sacred friendship ever burn'd more brightly!
Immortal bosoms can alone admit
A flame more pure, more permanent than mine.

Al. Thou dearer to me than my groves of laurel,
I know thou lov'st thy Alexander more
Than Clytus does the king.

Lys. Now for my fate!

I see that death awaits me—yet I'll on.
Dread sir, I cast me at your royal feet.

Al. Rise my Lyfimachus; thy veins and mine,
From the same fountain have deriv'd their streams.
Is not that Clytus——

Clyt. Your old faithful soldier.

[thinks

Al. Clytus, thy hand.—Thus, double arm'd, me-
I stand tremendous as the Lybian god,
Who, while his priests and I quaff'd sacred blood,
Acknowledged me his son. My light'ning thou,
And thou my mighty thunder. I have seen
Thy glitt'ring sword out fly cœ'ltial fire;
And when I've cry'd, begone and execute,
I've seen him run swifter than the starting hinds,
Nor bent the tender grass beneath his feet.

Lys. When fame invited, and Alexander leads,
Dangers and toils but animate the brave.

Clyt. Perish the soldier inglorious and despis'd,
Who starts from either, when the king cries—on.

Al. O Clytus! O my noble veteran!
Twas, I remember, when I pass'd the Granicus,
Thy arm preserv'd me from unequal force.
When fierce Icanor and the bold Rhefaces,
Fell both upon me, with two mighty blows,

C

And

And clove my temper'd helmet quite afunder,
Then, like a god, flew Clytus to my aid,
Thy thunder struck Rhefaces to the ground,
And turn'd with ready vengeance on Icanor.

Clyt. To your own deeds that victory you owe,
And sure your arms did never boast a nobler.

Al. By Heav'n they never did; they never can:
And I am prouder to have pass'd that stream,
Than to have done a million o'er the plain.
Can none remember! Yes, I know all must;
When glory, like the dazzling eagle, stood
Perch'd on my beaver in the Granick flood;
When fortune's self my standard trembling bore,
And the pale fates stood frightened on the shore;
When each immortal on the billows rode,
And I myself appeared the leading god.

Aris. Haste, first of heroes, from this fatal place;
Far, far from Babylon enjoy your triumph,
Or all the glories, which your youth has won,
Are blasted in their spring.

Al. What mean thy fears?
And why that wild distraction on thy brow?

Aris. This morn, great king, I view'd the angry sky, Obe
And frightened at the dreadful prodigies,
To Oresmades for instruction flew;
But as I pray'd, deep echoing groans I heard,
And shrieks as of the damn'd that howl for sin.
Shock'd at the omen, while amaz'd I lay,
In prostrate rev'rence on the trembling floor,
Thus, in a voice like thunder, spoke the god:
'The brightest glory of imperial man,
The pride of nations, and the boast of fame,
Remorseless fate in Babylon has doom'd
To sudden and irrevocable ruin.

Al. If Heaven ordains that Babylon must fall,
Can I prevent th'immutable decree? *Enter Perdiccas.*

Per. O horror! horror! dreadful and potentious!

Al. How now Perdiccas, whence this exclamation?

Per. As Meleager and myself this morn,
Led forth the Persian horse to exercise,
We heard a noise as of a rushing wind;
When suddenly a flight of baleful birds,
Like a thick cloud, obscur'd the face of Heav'n:
On sounding wings from different parts they flew,
Encount'ring met, and battled in the air;

Their

Their talons clasp'd, their beaks gave mighty blows,
And show'rs of blood fell copious from their wounds.

Al. Though all the curtains of the sky were drawn,
And the stars wink, young Ammon shall go on;
While my Statira shines I cannot stay,
Love lifts his torch to light me on my way,
And her bright eyes create another day.

Lyf. Vouchsafe, dread sir, to hear my humble suit,
A prince intreats it, and, what's more, your kinsman.

Al. A soldier asks it, that's the noblest claim.

Lyf. For all the services my sword has done,
Humbly I beg the princess Parifatis.

Al. Lyfimachus no more—it is not well,—
My word, you know, was to Hephestion giv'n;
How dare you then—but let me hear no more on't.

Lyf. At your command to scale th' embattled wall,
Or fetch the gore-dy'd standard from the foe,
When has Hephestion flown with warmer zeal?
When did he leave Lyfimachus behind?
These I have done, for these were in my pow'r;
But when you charge me to renounce my love,
And from my thoughts to banish Parifatis;
Obedience there becomes impossible,
Nature revolts, and my whole soul rebels.

Al. It does, brave sir!—then hear me, and be dumb.
When by my order curst Calisthenes
Was as a traitor doom'd to live in torments,
Your pity sped him in despite of me.
Think not I have forgot your insolence;
No, too! I pardon it.—Yet, if again
Thou dar'st to cross me with another crime,
The bolts of fury shall be doubled on thee.
In the mean time—think not of Parifatis;
For if thou dost—by the immortal Ammon!
I'll not regard that blood of mine thou shar'st,
But use thee as the vilest Macedonian.

Lyf. I knew you partial, ere I mov'd my suit;
Yet know, it shakes not my determin'd purpose;
While I have life and strength to wield a sword,
I never will forego the glorious claim.

Al. Against my life: ha! traitor, was it so;
'Tis said that I am rash, of hasty humour;
But I appeal to the immortal gods,
If ever petty, poor, provincial I was,
Had temper like to mine? My slave, whom I

Could tread to clay, dares utter bloody threats.

Clyt. Forgive, dread sir, the frantic warmth of love;
The noble prince, I read it in his eyes,
Wou'd die a thousand deaths to serve his prince,
And justify his loyalty and truth.

Lys. I mean his minion there, should feel my arm.
Love claims his blood, nor shall he live to triumph
In that destruction that awaits his rival.

Al. I pardon thee, for my old Clytus' sake.
But if once more thou mention thy rash love,
Or dar'st attempt Hephestion's precious life,
I'll pour such storms of indignation on thee,
Philetas rack, Calisthenes disgrace,
Shall be delight to what thou shalt endure.

Clyt. My lord, the aged queen, with Parisatis,
Come to congratulate your safe arrival.

Enter Syfigambis and Parisatis.

Al. O thou, the best of women, Syfigambis,
Source of my joy, blest parent of my love!

Syf. In humble duty to the gods and you,
Permit us, sir, with gratitude to kneel.
Thro' you the royal house of Persia shines,
Rais'd from the depth of wretchedness and ruin,
In all the splendor of imperial greatness.

Al. To meet me thus was generously done;
But still there wants to crown my happiness,
That treasure of my soul, my dear Statira;
Had she but come to meet her Alexander,
I had been blest indeed.

Clyt. Now who shall dare
To tell him of the queen's vow?

Al. How fares
My love?—Ha! none answer me! all silent!
A sudden horror, like a bolt of ice,
Shoots to my heart, and numbs the seat of life.

Heph. I would relate it, but my courage fails me.

Al. Why stand you all as you were noted here?
What will none answer? my Hephestion silent!
If thou hast any love for Alexander!
If ever I oblig'd thee by my care,
When thro' the field of death my eye had watch'd thee,
Resolve my doubts, and rescue me from madness.

Heph. Your mourning queen has no disease but grief
Occasion'd by the jealous pangs of love.
She heard, dread sir, (for what can 'scape a lover)

Tha

That you, regardless of your vows at Susa,
Had to Roxana's charms resign'd your heart,
And revell'd in the joys you once forswore.

Al. I own the subtle forceress, in my rior,
My reason gone, seduc'd me to her bed;
But when I wak'd, I shook the Circe off,
Tho' the enchantress held me by the arm,
And wept and gaz'd with all the force of love.
Nor griev'd I less for that which I had done,
Than when at Thais suit, enraged with wine,
I set the fam'd Persepolis on fire.

Heph. Your queen Statira, in the rage of grief,
And agony of desolate love, has sworn,
Never to see your majesty again.

Al. O! madam, has she, has Statira sworn,
Never to see her Alexander more?
Impossible! she cou'd not, would not swear it.
Is she not gentle as the guileless infant,
Mild as the genial breezes of the spring,
And softer than the melting sighs of love?

Par. With sorrow, sir, I heard the solemn vow
My mother heard it, and in vain abjur'd her,
By every tender motive, to recall it.

Sys. But with that fierceness she resents her wrongs,
Dwells on your fault, and heightens the offence,
That I could wish your majesty forget her.

Al. Ha! could you wish me to forget Statira!
The star, which brightens Alexander's life,
His guide by day, and goddess of his nights!
I feel her now; she beats in every pulse,
Throbs at my heart, and circles with my blood.

Sys. Have patience, son, and trust to Heav'n and me;
If my authority has any influence,
I will exert it, and she shall be yours.

Al. Haste, madam, haste, if you would have me live.
Fly, ere, for ever, she abjure the world,
And stop the sad procession; and Parisatis,
Hang thou about her, wash her feet with tears.
Nay, haste; the breath of gods, and eloquence
Of angels, go along with you. Oh! my heart!

[*Exeunt Sys. and Par.*]

Lys. Now let your majesty, who feels the pangs
Of disappointed love, reflect on mine.

Al. Ha!

Clyt. What are you mad? Is this a time to plead?

Lyf. The proper't time ; he dares not now be partial And
 Let Heav'n, in justice, should avenge my wrongs,
 And double ev'ry pang which he feels now. Rel

Al. Why dost thou tempt me thus to thy undoing ?
 Dost thou shoul' it have, were it not courted so. Or
 But know, to thy confusion, that my word,
 Like delberry, admits of no repeal : A C

Therefore in chains, shalt thou behold the nuptials
 Of my Hephæstion. Guards, take him prisoner. Pa

Lyf. Away, ye slaves, I'll not resign my sword,
 Till first I've diench'd it in my rival's blood. Un

Al. I charge you kill him not ; take him alive ;
 The dignity of kings is now concern'd,
 And I will find a way to tame this rebel. W

Chr. Kneel—for I see rage light'ning in his eyes. Gr

Lyf. I neither hope, nor will I sue for pardon ;
 Had I my sword and liberty again, Li
 Again I would attempt his favourite's heart. W

Al. Hence, from my sight, and bear him to a dungeon. A
 Perdiccas, give this lion to a lion ; W
 None speak for him ; fly ; stop his mouth, away. Sh

[*Lyfimaachus carried off.* T

Clyt. This comes of women—the result of love.
 Yet were I heated now with wine, I doubt I n
 I should be preaching in the fool's behalf. Th

Al. Come hither, Clytus, and my friend Hephæstion ;
 Lend me your arms, for I am sick o' th' sudden. H
 I fear, betwixt Statira's cruel vows, D
 And fond Roxana's arts, your king will fall. A

Clyt. Better the race of women were destroyed,
 And Persia sunk in everlasting ruin. A

Heph. Look up, my lord, and bend not thus your head,
 As if you purpos'd to forsake the world,
 Which you have greatly won. A

Al. Wou'd I had not ;
 There's no true joy in such unweildy fortune. Sh
 Eternal gazers lasting troubles make ; A
 All find my spots, but few observe my brightness. H
 Stand from about me all, and give me air ! W
 Yes, I will shake this cupid from my soul ; H
 I'll fight the feeble god with war's alarms, A
 Or drown his pow'r in fields of hostile blood. H
 Grant me, great Mars, once more in arms to shine, T
 And break, like light'ning, thro' the embattled line ; O
 Thro' fields of death to whirl the rapid car,

And

And blaze amidst the thunder of the war;
 Resistless as the bolt that rends the grove,
 Or greatly perish like the son of Jove. [Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE E, an open court. Trumpets sounding a dead march. *Lyfimachus* led prisoner. *Eumenes*, *Perdiccas*, *Parisatis*, and guards.

Par. STAY, my *Lyfimachus*! a moment stay!
 O whither art thou going!—Hold a moment!
 Unkind! thou know'st my life was wrapt in thine,
 Why would'st thou then to worse than death expose me?

Lyf. O may'st thou live in joys without alloy!
 Grant it, ye gods! a better fortune waits thee;
 Live and enjoy it—'tis my dying wish.
 While to the grave the last *Lyfimachus*
 Alone retires, and bids the world adieu.

Par. Even in that grave will *Parisatis* join thee:
 Yes, true man! not death itself shall part us;
 A mother's power, a sister's soft'ning tears,
 With all the fury of a tyrant's frown,
 Shall not compel me to outlive thy loss.

Lyf. Were I to live till nature's self decay'd,
 This wondrous waste of unexampled love,
 I never could repay.—O *Parisatis*!
 Thy charms might fire a coward into courage;
 How must they act then on a soul like mine?
 Defenceless and unarm'd, I fight for thee,
 And may, perhaps, compel th' astonish'd world,
 And force the king to own that I deserve thee.

Eumenes take the princess to thy charge;
 Away, *Perdiccas*, all my soul's on fire. [Exeunt.]

SCENE, the place. Enter *Roxana* and *Cassander*.

Ro. Deserted! said'st thou? for a girl abandon'd!
 A puny girl made up of watery elements!
 Shall she embrace the god of my desires,
 And triumph in the heart *Roxana* claims!

Cas. O princess! had you seen his wild despair!
 Had you beheld him when he heard her vow,
 Words wou'd but wrong the agonies he felt:
 He fainted thrice, and life seem'd fled for ever;
 And when by our assiduous care recall'd,
 He snatch'd his sword, and aim'd it at his breast,
 Then rail'd at you with most unheard of curses.

Ro. If I forget it, may'st thou, Jove, deprive me
 Of vengeance, make the most wretched thing

On earth, while living, and when dead, the lowest
And blackest of the fiends.

Cas. O nobly said,

Just is the vengeance which inflames your soul ;
Your wrongs demand it—but let reason govern,
This wild rage else may disappoint your aims.

Ro. Away, away, and give a whirlwind room ;
Madness but menely represents my toil ;
Pride, indignation, fury and contempt,
War in my breast, and torture me to madness.

Cas. O think not I would check your boldest flights ;
No—I approve 'em, and will aid your vengeance.
But, princess, let us chuse the safest course,
Or we may give our foes new cause of triumph,
Should they discover, and prevent our purpose.

Ro. Fear not, Cassander, nothing shall prevent it :
Roxana dooms him, and her voice is fate.
My soul from childhood has aspired to empire ;
In early non-age I was us'd to reign
Among my she companions : I despis'd
The trifling arts, and little wiles of women,
And taught 'em, with an Amazonian spirit,
To win the steed, to chase the flaming boar,
And conquer man, the lawless charter'd savage.

Cas. Her words, her every motion fires me !

Ro. But when I heard of Alexander's fame,
How with a handful he had vanquish'd millions,
Spoil'd all the east, and captive held our queens ;
While, like a god, unconquer'd by their charms,
With heav'nly pity he asswag'd their woes,
Dry'd up their tears, and sooth'd 'em into peace ;
I hung attentive on my father's lips,
And wish'd him tell the wondrous tale again.
No longer pleasing were my former sports ;
Love had its turn, and all the woman reign'd.
Involuntary sighs heav'd in my breast,
And glowing blushes crimson'd on my cheek ;
Ev'n in my slumbers I have often mourn'd,
In plaintive sounds, and murmur'd Alexander.

Cas. Curse on his name—she dotes upon him still.

Ro. At length this conqueror to Zogdia came,
And, cover'd o'er with laurels, storm'd the city :
But, O Cassander ! where shall I find words
To paint the extatic transports of my soul !
When, midst a circle of unrival'd beauties,

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I saw myself distinguish'd by the hero.
 With artless rapture I receiv'd his vows.
 The warmest sure that ever lover breath'd,
 Of fervent love, and everlasting truth.

Cas. And need you then be told, those times are past !
 Statira now engrosses all his thoughts :
 The Persian queen, without a rival, reigns
 Sole mistress of his heart—nor can thy charms,
 The brightest sure that ever woman boasted,
 Nor all his vows of everlasting love,
 Secure Roxana from disdain and insult.

Ro. O ! thou hast rous'd the lion in my soul ;
 Ha ! shall the daughter of Darius hold him ?
 Shall that weak Semele embrace my Jove ?

Cas. O queen ! exert, exert that tow'ring spirit,
 By nature form'd to keep the world in awe.

Ro. Yes, 'tis resolv'd ; I will resume my sphere,
 Or, falling, spread a general ruin round me.
 Roxana and Statira, they are names
 That must for ever jar, like clashing clouds ;
 When they encounter, thunders must ensue.

Cas. Behold, she comes, in all the pomp of sorrow,
 Determin'd to fulfil her solemn vow !

Enter Syfigambis and Statira.

Ro. Away, and let us mark th' important scene.

[They retire.]

Syf. O my Statira, how has passion chang'd thee !
 Think in the rage of disappointed love,
 If treated thus, and hurried to extremes,
 What Alexander may denounce against us ;
 Against the poor remains of lost Darius !

Sta. O fear not that, I know he will be kind,
 For my sake kind, to you and Parisatis.
 Tell him I rail'd not at his falsehood to me,
 But with my parting breath spoke kindly of him ;
 Tell him I wept at our divided loves,
 And, sighing, sent a last forgiveness to him.

Syf. No ; I can ne'er again presume to meet him,
 Never approach the much-wrong'd Alexander,
 If thou refuse to see him—O Statira !
 Thy aged mother, and thy weeping country,
 Claim thy regard, and challenge thy compassion ;
 Hear us, my child, and lift us from despair.

Sta. Thus low, I cast me at your royal feet,
 To bathe them with my tears ; or, if you please,

THE RIVAL QUEENS; OR,

I'll let out life, and wash 'em with my blood.
 But, I conjure you, not to rack my soul,
 Nor hurry my wild thoughts to perfect madness:
 Should now Darius' awful ghost appear,
 And you, my mother, stand beseeching by,
 I would persist to death, and keep my vow.

Ro. This fortitude of soul compels my wonder.

Syl. Hence, from my sight! ungrateful wretch, be gone!

And hide thee where bright virtue never shone:
 For, in the sight of Heaven, I here renounce,
 And cast thee off an alien to my blood.

[*Exit.*

Roxana comes forward.

Ro. Forgive, great queen, th' intrusion of a stranger;
 With grief Roxana sees Statira weep;
 I've heard, and much applaud your fix'd resolve,
 To quit the world for Alexander's sake;
 And yet I fear, so greatly he adores you,
 That he will rather chuse to die of sorrow,
 Than live for the despis'd Roxana's charms.

Sta. Spare, spare your counterfeited fears;
 You know your beauty, and have prov'd its power;
 Tho' humbly born, have you not captive held,
 In love's soft chains, the conqu'ror of the world?
 Away to libertines, and boast thy conquest;
 A shameful conquest: in his hours of riot,
 When wine prevail'd, and virtue lost it's influence,
 Then, only then, Roxana could surprize
 My Alexander's heart.

Ro. Affected girl,
 To some romantic grove's sequester'd gloom,
 Thy sickly virtue wou'd, it seems, retire,
 To shun the triumphs of a favour'd rival.
 In vain thou fly'st—for there, ev'n there I'll haunt thee!
 Plague thee all day, and torture thee all night:
 There shalt thou hear, in what extatic joys,
 Roxana revels with the first of men;
 And as thou hear'st the rav'rous scene recited,
 With frantic jealousy thou'lt madly curse
 Thy own weak charms, that cou'd not fix the rover.

Sta. How weak is woman! at the storm she shrinks,
 Dreads the drawn sword, and trembles at the thunder;
 Yet when strong jealousy inflames her soul,
 The sword may glitter, and the tempest roar,
 She scorns the danger, and provokes her fate.

Rival,

Rival, I thank thee.—Thou hast fir'd my soul,
And rais'd a storm beyond thy pow'r to lay;
Soon shalt thou tremble at the dire effects,
And curst, to late, the folly that undid thee.

Ro. Sure the disdain'd Statira does not mean it.

Sta. By all my hopes of happiness I dare:

And know, proud woman, what a mother's threats,

be A sister's sighs, and Alexander's tears,

Ce'd not effect, thy rival rage hath done.

I'll see the king in spite of all I swore,

Tho' curst, that thou may'st never see him more.

Enter Alexander, Syfigamlis, Hephsestion, and Clytus.

Al. O my Statira! Thou relentless fair!

r; Turn thine eyes on me—I would talk to them:

What shall I say to work upon thy soul?

What words, what looks, can melt thee to forgiveness?

Sta. Talk of Roxana and the conquer'd Indies;

The great adventures, and successful love,

And I will listen to the rapt'rous tale;

But rather shun me, a desperate wretch,

Resign'd to sorrow and eternal woe.

Al. O! I could die, with transport, die before thee!

Wouldst thou but, as I lay convuls'd in death,

Cast a kind look, or drop a tender tear.

Say, but 'twas pity, one so fam'd in arms,

One who has escap'd a thousand deaths in battle,

For the first fault should fall a wretched victim

To jealous anger, and offended love.

Ro. Am I then fall'n so low in thy esteem,

That for another thou would'st rather die,

Than live for me?—How am I altered, tell me,

Since last at Sufa; with repeated oaths,

You swore the conquest of the world afforded

e! Less joy, less glory than Roxana's love.

Al. Take that conquer'd world, dispose of crowns,

And canton out the empires of the globe;

But leave me, madam, with repentant tears,

And undisssembled sorrows, to atone

The wrongs I've offer'd to this injur'd excellence.

Ro. Yes, I will go, ungrateful as thou art!

Bane to my life, and murd'rer of my peace;

I will be gone; this last disdain has cur'd me.

But have a care—I warn you not to trust me,

Or by the gods that witness to thy perjuries,

I'll raise a fire that shall consume you both,

Tho'

Tho' I partake the ruin.

Sta. Alexander! O is it possible?
Immortal gods! Can guilt appear so lovely?
Yet, yet I pardon, I forgive thee all.

Al. Forgive me all!—O catch the heav'nly sounds;
Catch 'em, ye winds, and, as ye fly, disperse
The rapt'rous tidings, thro' th' extended world,
That all may share in Alexander's joy.

Syl. Now all my mother's blessings fall upon thee,
My ever dear, my best lov'd Statira.

Al. Is it then giv'n me, thus to touch thy hand,
And press thy beauties to my panting bosom,
To gaze upon thy eyes, and taste thy breath?
While ev'ry sigh comes forth so fraught with sweets,
'Tis incense to be offer'd to a god.

Sta. Yes, dear deceiver, I forgive thee all,
But longer dare not hear thy charming tongue;
For while I hear thee, my resolves give way:
Be therefore quick, and take thy last farewell;
Farewel, my love.—Eternally farewell!

Al. O my Hephæstion, bear me, or I sink,
Why, my Statira, will you use me thus?
I know the cause, my working brain divines it;
You say you've pardon'd, but with this reserve,
Never again to bless me with your love.

Sta. All seeing heav'n support me.

Al. Speak to me,
Speak to me, love, tho' banish ment and death
Hang on thy lips, yet while thy tongue pronounces
The music will a while suspend my pains,
And mitigate the horrors of despair.
O! cou'd I see you thus!

Sta. Why did I swear! his sorrows wound my heart,
Soft pity pleads, and I again must love him:
But I have sworn, and therefore cannot yield.

Al. Go then, inhuman, triumph in my pains,
Feed on the pangs that rend this wretched heart,
For now 'tis plain you never lov'd. Statira!
O! I could sound that charming cruel name,
Till the tir'd echo faint with repetition;
Till all the breathless groves, and quiet myrtles,
Shook with my sighs, as if a tempest bow'd 'em,
Ever Statira! nothing but Statira!

Sta. Such was his looks, so melting was his voice,
Such his soft sighs, and his deluding tears,

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[*Ex.* When with that pleasing perjur'd breath avowing,
His whispers trembled thro' my cred'ulous ears,
And told the story of my utter ruin.
Gods! if I stay, I shall again believe:
Farewel, thou greatest pleasure, greatest pain.

Al. I charge ye, stay her; stay her by the gods—
O turn thee, thou bewitching brightness, turn;
Hear my last words, and see my dying pangs.
Lo! at your feet, behold a monarch falls,
A prince, who gave the conquer'd world to thee.
And thought thy love bought cheaply with the gift;
Whose glories, laurels, bloom but in thy smiles,
Now shrunk and blasted by thy cruel hate,
Untimely falls. Yet, Oh! when thou shalt die,
May death be mild as thou art cruel hate,
Untimely falls. Yet, Oh! when thou shalt die,
While circling angels waft thee to repose.

Syl. Art thou turn'd savage? Is thy heart of marble?
But if this posture move thee not to pity,
I never will speak more.

Al. O my Statira!

I swear, my queen, I'd not outlive our parting.
My soul grows still as death. Say, wilt thou pardon?
'Tis all I ask. Wilt thou forgive the transports
Of a deep wounded heart, and all is well?

Sta. Rise, and may heav'n forgive you, like Statira.

Al. You are too gracious.—Clytus, bear me hence.
When I am laid i' th' earth, yield her the world.
There's something here, that heaves as cold as ice,
That stops my breath. Farewel, farewell for ever!

Sta. Hold off, and let me run into his arms:
My life, my love, my lord, my Alexander,
If thy Statira's love can give thee joy,
Revive, and be immortal as the gods.

Al. My fluttering heart, tumultuous with its bliss,
Would leap into thy bosom: 'tis too much.
O let me press thee in my eager arms,
And strain thee hard to my transported breast.

Sta. But shall Roxana—

Al. Let her not be nam'd.

O! madam, how shall I repay your goodness?
And you, my fellow-warriors, who cou'd weap
For your lost king? But talk of griefs no more;
The banquet waits, and I invite you all.

My equals in the throne, as in the grave,
Without distinction come, and share my joy.

Clyt. Excuse me, sir, if I for once am absent.

M. Excuse thee, Clytus? None shall be excus'd.
All revel out the day, 'tis my command,
Gay as the Persian god ourself will stand,
With a crown'd goblet in our lifted hand;
Young Ammon and Statira shall go round,
While antic measures beat the burthen'd ground,
And to the vaulted skies our trumpets clangors found. }

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV. *Clytus, Hephæstion, and Eumenes.*

Clyt. **U**RGE me no more, I hate the Persian dress,
Nor should the king be angry at the reverence
I owe my country; — sacred are her customs,
And honest Clytus will to death observe 'em.
O let me rot in Macedonian rags,
Or, like Calisthenes be cag'd for life,
Rather than shine in fashions of the east.

Eum. Let me, brave Clytus, as a friend, intreat you.

Heph. What virtue is there that adorns a throne,
Exalts the heart, and dignifies the man,
Which shines not brightly in our royal master?
And yet perversely you'll oppose his will,
And thwart an innocent unhurtful humour.

Clyt. Unhurtful! Oh! 'tis monstrous affectation!
Pregnant with venom, in its nature black,
And not to be excus'd! — Shall man, weak man,
Exact the reverence which we pay to Heaven!
And bid his fellow creatures kneel before him,
And yet be innocent? Hephæstion, no!
The pride that lays a claim to adoration,
Insults our reason, and provokes the gods.

Eum. Yet what was Jove, the god whom we adore?
Was he not once a man, and rais'd to Heav'n
For gen'rous acts, and virtues more than human?

Heph. By all his thunder, and his sov'reign-pow'r,
I'll not believe the world yet ever felt
An arm like Alexander's — Not that god
You nam'd, tho' riding in a car of fire,
Cou'd in a shorter space do greater deeds,
Or more effectually have taught mankind
To bend submissive, and confe's his sway.

Clyt. I tell you, boy, that Clytus loves the king

As well as you, or any soldier here ;
Yet I disdain to soothe his growing pride ;
The hero charms me, but the god offends.

Heph. Then go not to the banquet.

Clyt. I was bid,

Young minion, was I not, as well as you ?
I'll go, my friend, in this old habit, thus,
And laugh and drink the king's health heartily ;
And while you, blushing, bow your heads to earth,
And hide 'em in the dust—I'll stand erect,
Straight as a spear, the pillar of my country,
And be by so much nearer to the gods.

Heph. But see, the king appears.

Enter Alexander, Statira, Syfigambis, and Parisatis.

Par. O gracious monarch !

Spare him, O spare Lyfimachus's life !
I know you will—the brave delight in mercy.

Al. Shield me, Statira, shield me from her sorrows.

Par. Save him, O save him, ere it be too late ;
Speak the kind word, let not your soldier perish
For one rash action, by despair occasion'd !
I'd follow thus, for ever on my knees ;

You shall not pass. Statira ! O intert him !

Al. O ! madam, take her, take her from about me !
Her streaming eyes assail my very soul,
And shake my best resolves.

Sta. Did I not break
Thro' all for you ? nay, now my lord, you must.
By all th' obedience I have paid you long,
By all your passion, sighs, and tender looks,
O save a prince, whose only crime is love.

Sys. I had not join'd in this bold suit, my son,
But that it add new lustre to your honours.

Al. Honour ! what's that ! has not Statira said it ?
Were I the king of the blue firmament,
And the bold Titans should again make war,
Tho' my resistless thunders were prepar'd,
By all the gods she should arrest my arm,
Uplifted to destroy 'em. Fly, Hephellion :
Fly, Clytus ; snatch him from the jaws of death,
And to the royal banquet bring him straight,
Bring him in triumph, fit for loads of honour.

[Exeunt Heph. Clyt. Eum, and Par.]

Sta. O my lov'd lord ! why are you thus obliging,
Beyond expression, kind ?

Al. Excellent woman!

'Tis not in nature to support such joy.

Sta. Go, my best love, unbend you at the banquet:
Indulge in joy, and laugh your cares away;
While in the bowers of great Semiramis,
I dress your bed with all the sweets of nature,
And crown it, as the altar of our loves,
Where I will lay me down, and softly mourn,
But never close my eyes, till you return.

[*Exeunt Stat. and Semiramis*]

Al. Is she not more than mortal can desire?
As Venus lovely, and as Dian chaste?
And yet, I know not why, our parting shocks me;
A ghastly paleness sat upon her brow;
Her voice, like dying echoes, fainter grew;
And as I wrung her by the rosy fingers,
Methought the strings of my great heart were crack'd:
What could it mean? forward, Laomedon.

Enter Roxana, Cassander, Polyperchon, &c.

Why, madam, gaze you thus?

Ro. For a last look,

And to imprint the memory of my wrongs,
Roxana's wrong's, on Alexander's mind.

Al. On to the banquet.

[*Exit cum suis*]

Ro. Ha! with such disdain!

So unconcern'd! O I could tear myself,
Him, you, and all the hateful world to atoms.

Cass. Still keep this spirit up, preserve it still,
And know us for your friends. We like your rage;
'Tis lovely in you, and your wrongs require it;
Here, in the sight of Heaven, Cassander swears,
Unaw'd by death, to second your revenge.
Speak but the word, and, swift as thought can fly,
The tyrant falls a victim to your fury.

Ro. Shall he then die? shall I consent to kill him?
I, that have lov'd him with that eager fondness,
Shall I consent to have him basely murder'd,
And see him clasp'd in the cold arms of death?
Worlds should not tempt me to that deed of horror.

Pol. The weak fond scruples of your love might pass
Was not the empire of the world concern'd;
But, madam, think when time shall teach his tongue,
How will the glorious infant which you bear,
Arraign his partial mother, for refusing
To fix him on the throne, which here we offer?

Cas. If Alexander lives, you cannot reign,
Nor will your child. Old Sygambis plans
Your sure destruction. Boldly then, prevent her,
Give but the word, and Alexander dies.

Pol. Not he alone, the Persian race shall bleed,
At your command, one universal ruin,
Hail, like a deluge, overwhelm the eastern world,
Till gloriously we raise you to the throne.

Ro. But, till the mighty ruin be accomplish'd
Where can Roxana fly th' avenging arms
Of those who must succeed this godlike man?

Cas. Would you vouchsafe in these expanded arms
To seek a refuge, what cou'd hurt you here?
Here you might reign, with undiminish'd lustre,
Queen of the east, and empress of my soul.

Ro. Disgrac'd Roxana! whither art thou fall'n?
Till this cruel hour, I never was unhappy:
There's not one mark of former majesty,
To awe the slave that offers at my honour.

Cas. Impute not, madam, my unbounded passion
To want of reverence—I have lov'd you long.

Ro. Peace, villain, peace, and let me hear no more.
Think'it thou I'd leave the bosom of a god,
And stoop to thee, thou moving piece of earth?
Hence, from my sight, and never more presume
To meet my eyes; for mark me, if thou dar'st,
To Alexander I'll unfold thy treason;
Whose life, in spite of all his wrongs to me,
I shall still be sacred, and above thy malice.

Cas. By your own life, the greatest oath I swear,
Cassander's passion from this hour is dumb;
And, as the best atonement I can make,
Statira dies, the victim of your vengeance.

Ro. Cassander, rise, 'tis ample expiation.
Yes, rival, yes—this night shall be thy last.
This night, I know, is destin'd for thy triumph,
And gives my Alexander to thy arms.
O! murderous thought!

Pol. The bow'rs of great Semiramis are made
The scene of love; Perdiccas holds the guard.

Cas. Now is your time. While Alexander revels,
And the whole court re-echoes with his riot,
To end her, and with her to end your fears.
Give me but half the Zogdian slaves that wait you,
And deem her dead. Nor shall a soul escape,

That serves your rival to disperse the news.

Ro. By me, they die, Perdiccas and Statira ;
Hence with thy aid, I neither ask nor want it,
But will myself conduct the flames to battle ;
Were she to fall by any arm but mine,
Well might she murmur, and arraign her stars ;
'Tis life well lost to die by my command ;
What must it be to perish by my hand ?
Rival reject, and, pleas'd, resign thy breath,
Roxana's vengeance grants thee noble death.

Cal. All but her Jove this Semele disdains.
We must be quick—she may perhaps betray
The great design, and frustrate our revenge.

Pol. Has Philip got instructions how to act ?

Cal. He has, my friend ; and, faithful to our cause,
Resolves to execute the fatal order.

Bear him this vial—it contains a poison
Of that exalted force, that deadly nature,
Shou'd Æsculapius drink it, in five hours
(For then it works) the god himself were mortal.
I drew it from Nonacris' horrid spring ;
Mix'd with his wine, a single drop gives death,
And sends him howling to the shades below.

Pol. I know its power, for I've seen it try'd :
Pains of all sorts thro' every nerve and artery
At once it scatters—burns at once and freezes,
Till, by extremity of torture forc'd,
The soul consents to leave her joyless home,
And seek for ease in worlds unknown to this.

Cal. Now let us part : with Thessalus and Philip
Haste to the banquet—at his second call,
Let this be given him, and it crowns our hopes.
Now, Alexander, now we'll soon be quits,
Death for a blow is interest indeed.

[*Exeunt.*]
Alexander, Perdiccas, Cassander, Polyperchon, Eumenes, &c.
discovered at the banquet.

Al. To our immortal health, and our fair queen's :
All drink it deep ; and while the bowl goes round,
Mars and Bellona join to make us music.
An hundred bulls be offered to the sun,
White as his beams : speak the big voice of war ;
Beat all our drums, and sound our silver trumpets :
Provoke the gods to follow our example,
In bowls of nectar, and replying thunder.

Enter Clytus, Hephestion, and Iysimachus bloody.

Cht.

Clyt. Long live the king; long live great Alexander;
And conquest crown his arms with deathless laurels,
Propitious to his friends, and all he favours.

Al. Did I not give command you should preserve Ly-
simachus?

Heph. Dread sir, you did.

Al. What then

Portend these bloody marks?

Heph. Ere we arriv'd,

Exit Perdicas had already plac'd the prince
In a lone court, all but his hands unarm'd.

Clyt. On them were gauntlets: such was his desire,
In death to shew the difference betwixt
The blood of Æacus and common men.
Forth issuing from his den, amaz'd we saw
The horrid savage, with whose hideous roar
The palace shook. His angry eye-balls glaring
With triple fury, menac'd death and ruin.

Heph. With unconcern the gallant prince advanced;
Now Parisatis be the glory thine,
But mine the danger, were his only words;
For as he spoke, the furious beast descried him,
And rush'd outrageous to devour his prey.

Clyt. Agile and vigorous, he avoits the shock
With a slight blow; and, as the lion turn'd,
Thrust gauntlet, arm, and all into his throat,
And with Herculean strength tears forth the tongue:
Foaming and bloody, the disabled savage
Sunk to the earth, and ploughed it with his teeth;
While with an active bound your conquering soldier,
Leap'd on his back, and dash'd his scull in pieces,

Al. By all my laurels 'twas a godlike act;
And 'tis my glory, as it shall be thine,
Exit. That Alexander cou'd not pardon thee.

Etc. O! my brave soldier, think not, all the pray'rs
And tears of the lamenting queens cou'd move me,
Like what thou hast perform'd; grow to my breath.

Lys. Thus self-condemn'd, and conscious of my guilt,
How shall I stand such unexampled goodness.

O pardon, sir, the transports of despair,
The frantic outrage of ungovern'd love.
Even when I shew'd the greatest want of reverence,
I cou'd have died, with rapture, in your service.

Al. Lydimachus, we both have been transported;
But from this hour be certain of my heart.

Clyt.

A lion

A lion be the impress of thy shield,
And that gold armour we from Porus won,
Thy king presents thee—but thy wounds ask rest.

Lys. I have no wounds, dread sir ; or, if I had,
Were they all mortal, they should stream unminded,
When Alexander was the glorious health.

Al. Thy hand, Hephæstion. Clasp him to thy heart,
And wear him ever near thee. Parifatis
Shall now be his who serves me best in war.
Neither reply, but mark the charge I give :
Live, live as friends—You will, you must, you shall.
'Tis a god gives you life.

Clyt. O ! monstrous vanity !

Al. Ha ! what says Clytus ? who am I ?

Clyt. The son
Of good king Philip.

Al. By my kindred gods
'Tis false. Great Ammon gave me birth.

Clyt. I've done.

Al. Clytus, what means that dress ? give him a robe
Take it, and wear it. [thre

Clyt. Sir, the wine, the weather
Has heated me ; besides, you know my humour.

Al. O, 'tis not well : I'd rather perish, burn,
Than be so singular and froward.

Clyt. I—
Would burn, hang, drown, but in a better cause.
I'll drink, or fight for sacred majesty
With any here. Fill me another bowl.
Will you excuse me ?

Al. You will be excused.
But let him have his humour : he is old.

Clyt. So was your father, sir ; this to his mem'ry.
Sound all the trumpets there.

Al. They shall not sound
Till the king drinks. Sure, I was born to wage
Eternal war. All are my enemies !
Whom I cou'd tame—But let the sports go on.

Lys. Nay, Clytus, you that cou'd advise so well.

Al. Let him persist, be positive and proud,
Envi us and sullen 'mongst the nobler soul,
Like an infernal spirit that hath stole
From hell, and mingled with the mirth of gods.

Clyt. When gods grow hot, no difference I I know

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Twixt them and devils—Fill me Greek wine.

Let—

Let fuller—I want spirits.

Let me have music.

Clyt. Music for boys—Clytus would hear the groans
Of dying soldiers and the neigh of steeds ;
Or, if I must be pester'd with shrill sounds,
Give me cries of matrons in sack'd towns.

Heph. Let us Lyfimachus awake the king ;
A heavy gloom is gathering on his brow,
Kneel all, with humblest adoration kneel,
And let a health to Jove's great son go round.

Al. Sound, sound, that all the universe may hear.
O for the voice of Jove, the world should know
The kindness of my people.—Rise, O rise,
My hands, my arms, my heart, are ever yours.

Clyt. I did not kiss the earth, nor must your hand —
I am unworthy, sir.

Al. I know thou art :

Thou enviest the great honour of thy master.
Sit, all my friends. Now let us talk of war ;
The noblest subject for a soldier's mouth ;
And speak, speak freely, else you love me not.
Who, think you, was the greatest general,
That ever led an army to the field !

Heph. A chief so great, so fortunately brave,
And justly so renown'd as Alexander,
The radiant sun, since first his beams gave light,
Never yet saw, or ever shall again.

Lyf. Such was not Cyrus, or the fam'd Alcides,
Nor great Achilles, whose tempestuous sword
Laid Troy in ashes, tho' the warring gods
Oppos'd him.

Al. O ! you flatter me, you flatter me.

Clyt. They do indeed ; and yet you love 'em for't,
But hate old Clytus for his hardy virtue.

Come, shall I speak a man, with equal bravery,
A better general, and experter soldier.

Al. I should be glad to learn & instruct me, sir.

Clyt. Your father, Philip.—I have seen him march,
All fought beneath his dreadful banner, where
The boldest at this table would have trembled.
Nay frown not, sir, you cannot look me dead.
Who Greeks join'd Greeks, then was the tug of war,
The labour'd battle sweat, and conquest bled.

Why

Why should I fear to speak a bolder truth,
Than e'er the lying priests of Ammon told you;
Philip fought men, but Alexander women,

Al. All envy, spite, and envy by the gods!
Is then my glory come to this, at last,
To conquer women! nay, he said the stoutest,
The stoutest here would tremble at his dangers.
In all the sickness, all the wounds I bore,
When from my reins the javelin's head was cut,
Lyfmachus, Hephestion, speak Perdiccas,
Did I once tremble? O! the cursed falsehood!
Did I once shake or groan; or act beneath
The dauntless resolution of a king?

Lyf. Wine has transported him.

Al. No, 'tis mere malice.

I warred woman too, at Oxydarce,
When planting on the walls a scaling-ladder,
I mounted, spight of show'rs of stones, bars, arrows,
And all the lumber which they thunder'd down;
When you beneath cry'd out, and spread your arms,
That I should leap among you. Did I so?

Lyf. Dead sir, the old man knows not what he says.

Al. Was I a woman, when, like Mercury,
I leap'd the walls and flew amidst the foe;
And, like a baited lion, dy'd myself
All over in the blood of those bold hunters,
Till, spent with toil, I battled on my knees,
Pluckt forth the darts, that made my shield a forest,
And hur'd 'em back with most unconquer'd fury?
Then, shining in my arms, I sun'd the field;
Mov'd, spoke, and fought, and was myself a war.

Clyt. 'Twas all bravado. For, before you leap'd,
You saw that I had burst the gates asunder.

Al. O! that thou wert but once more young
vig'rous,

That I might strike thee prostrate to the earth,
For this audacious lie, thou feeble dotard.

Clyt. I know the reason why you use me thus.
I sav'd you from the sword of bold Rhelaces,
Else had your godship slumber'd in the dust;
And most ungratefully you hate me for it.

Al. Hence from the banquet. Thus far I forgive thee.

Clyt. First try (for none can want forgiveness more)
To have your own bold blasphemies forgiven,
The shameful riots of a vicious life.

Iotas' murder.

Al. Ha! what said the traitor!

Hepb. Clytus, withdraw; Eumenes, force him hence.

must not tarry. Drag him to the door.

Clyt. No, let him send me, if I must be gone,

Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes,

great Parmenio, and his slaughter'd sons.

Al. Give me a javelin.

Hepb. Hold, sir.

Al. Sirrah! off,

and I at once strike thro' his heart and thine.

Lyf. O! sacred sir, have but a moment's patience.

Al. What! hold my arms? I shall be murder'd here,

the poor Darius, by my barb'rous subjects.

Andreas, sound our trumpets to the camp;

And all my soldiers to the court. Nay, haste;

for there is treason plotting 'gainst my life,

and I shall perish ere they come to save me.

gone to Philip, Attalus, Calisthenes, [*Stabs him.*

and let bold subjects learn by thy example,

not to provoke the patience of their prince.

Cyn. The rage of wine is drown'd in gushing blood:

Alexander! I have been to blame:

spite me not after death. For I repent,

that I so far have urg'd your noble nature.

Al. What's this I hear! say on, my dying soldier.

Clyt. I should have kill'd myself, had I but liv'd

and been once sober:—now I fall with honour;

my own hands would have brought foul death. O par-

don!

[*Dies.*

Al. Then I am lost; what has my vengeance done!

how is it thou hast slain? Clytus! what was he?

the faithfullest subject, worthiest counsellor,

the bravest soldier, he who sav'd thy life,

lying bare-headed at the river Granick;

and now he has a noble recompence;

for a rash word spoke in the heat of wine,

the poor, the honest Clytus, thou hast slain:

Clytus, thy friend, thy guardian, thy preserver.

Hepb. Remove the body, it inflames his sorrow.

Al. None dare to touch him, we must never part.

Andreas! Hepheshion and Lyfimachus,

that had the power, yet would not hold me. Oh!

Lyf. Dear sir, we did.

Al. I know ye did; ye held me

Like a wild beast, to let me go again
 With greater violence.—O ye've undone me!
 Excuse it not, you that cou'd stop a lion
 Cou'd not turn me; ye should have drawn your swords,
 And barr'd my rage with their advancing points:
 Made reason glitter in my dazzled eyes,
 Till I had seen the precipice before me:
 That had been noble, that had shewn the friend;
 Clytus wou'd so have done to save your lives.

Lyf. When men shall hear how highly you were
 urg'd—

Al. No; you have let me stain my rising glory,
 Which else had ended brighter than the sun:
 O! I am all a blot, which seas of tears,
 And my heart's blood can never wash away;
 Yet 'tis but just I try, and on the point,
 Still reaking, hurl my black polluted breast.

Heph. O! sacred fir—

Lyf. Forgive my pious hands,
 That dare, in duty, disarm my master.

Al. Yes, cruel men, ye now can shew your strength;
 Here's not a slave, but dares oppose my justice,
 Yet none had courage to prevent this murder;
 But I will render all endeavours vain
 That tends to save my life.—Here will I lie.

[*Falls on Clytus.*]

Close to my murder'd soldier's bleeding side.
 Thus clasping his cold body in my arms,
 Till death, like his, has clos'd my eyes for ever.

Enter Perdiccas.

Per. Treason! foul treason! Hephession, where's the
 king.

Heph. There, by old Clytus's side, whom he hath slain.

Per. Rise, sacred fir, and haste to save the queen.
 Roxana, fill'd with furious jealousy,
 Came with a guard, unmark'd: she gain'd the bow'r,
 And broke upon me with such sudden fury,
 That all have perish'd who oppos'd her rage.

Al. What says Perdiccas? is the queen in danger?

Per. Haste, fir, to your Statira, or she dies.

Al. Thus from the grave I rise to save my love;
 All draw your swords, on wings of light'ning move,
 Young Ammon leads you, and the cause is love;
 When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay,
 'Tis beauty calls, and glory leads the way.

Exeunt
 ACT

ACT V. SCENE, *the Bowyer of Semiramis.**Statira discovered asleep.*

Sta. **B**LESS me, ye pow'rs above, and guard my virtue!
Where are you fled, dear shades? Where are you
fled?

'Twas but a dream, and yet I saw and heard
My royal parents, who, while pious care
Sat on their faded cheeks, pronounc'd with tears,
Tears such as angels weep, this hour my last.
But hence with tear—my Alexander comes,
And fear and danger ever fled from him.
My Alexander! wou'd that he were here!
For, O! I tremble, and a thousand terrors
Rush in upon me, and alarm my heart:
But hark, 'tis he, and all my fears are fled;
My life, my joy, my Alexander comes.

Ro. [*within*] Make fast the gate with all its massy bars;
At length we've conquer'd this stupendous height,
And reach'd the grove, whose wonderful ascent
Is lost in clouds.

Sta. Ye guardian gods defend me!
Roxana's voice! then all the vision's true,
And die I must. *Enter Roxana.*

Ro. Secure the brazen gate.
Where is my rival? 'tis Roxana calls.

Sta. And what is she, who, with such tow'ring pride,
Wou'd awe a princess that is born above her?

Ro. Behold this dagger!—"Tis thy fate, Statira!
Behold, and meet it as becomes a queen.
Fain wou'd I find thee worthy of my vengeance;
Here, take my weapon then; and, if thou dar'st—

Sta. How little know'st thou what Statira dares!
Yes, cruel woman! yes, I dare meet death
With a resolve, at which thy coward heart
Would shrink. For terror haunts the guilty mind;
While conscious innocence, that knows no fear,
Can, smiling pass, and scorn thy idle threats.

Ro. Return, fair insolent! return, I say.
Dar'st thou, presumptuous to invade my rights!
Restore him quickly to my longing arms,
And with him give me back his broken vows,
Or I will rend them from thy bleeding heart.

Sta. Alas! Roxana! 'tis not in thy power;
I cannot if I wou'd—And O ye gods!
What were the world to Alexander's loss!

But love, thou know'st, was ever deaf to reason :
Wild as a storm, and lawless as the sea,
It laughs at council, and contemns restraint.

Ro. O ! forcerefs, to thy accursed charms
I owe the frenzy that distracts my soul :
To them I owe my Alexander's loss.

Too late thou tremblest at my just revenge,
My wrongs cry out, and vengeance will have way.

Sta. Yet think, Roxana, ere you plunge in murder,
Think on the horrors that must ever haunt you !
Think on the furies, those avenging ministers
Of Heav'n's high wrath, how they will rear your soul ;
All day distract you with a thousand fears ;
And when by night thou vainly seek'st repose,
They'll gather round, and interrupt your slumbers
With horrid dreams, and terrifying visions.

Ro. Add still, if possible, superior horrors.
Rather than leave my great revenge unfinish'd,
I'd dare 'em all, and tremble in the deed.

Therefore——— [*Holds up the dagger.*]

Sta. Hold, hold thy hand advanc'd in air.
I read my sentence written in thy eyes ;
Yet, O Roxana ! on thy black revenge,
One kindly ray of female pity beam,
And give me death in Alexander's presence.

Ro. Not for the world's wide empire should'st thou see
him.

Fool ! but for him thou might'st unheeded live ;
For his sake only art thou doom'd to die.
The sole remaining joy that glads my soul,
Is to deprive thee of the heart I've lost.

Enter a Slave.

Slave. Madam, the king and all his guards are come.
With frantic rage they thunder at the gate,
And must ere this have gain'd admittance.

Rox. Ha !
Too long I've trifled. Let me then redeem
The time mispent, and make great vengeance sure.

Sta. Is Alexander, O ye gods ! so high,
And can he not preserve me from thy fury ?

Ro. Nor he, nor Heav'n shall shield thee from my
justice.

Die, forcerefs, and all my wrongs die with thee.

[*Stabs her.*
Al.

H. [*without.*] Away, ye slaves! stand off—Quick
let me fly

With light'nings wings; nor Heav'n, nor earth shall stop
me.

Enter Alexander with attendants.

Al. Ha! O my soul! my queen, my love, Statira!
These wounds! are these my promis'd joys?

Sta. Alas!

My only love, my best and dearest blessing,
Wou'd I had died before you entered here;
For thus delighted, while I gaze upon thee,
Death grows more horrid, and I'm loth to leave thee.

Al. Thou shalt not leave me—Cruel, cruel stairs!
O where's the monster, where's the horrid fiend,
That struck at innocence, and murdered thee?

Ro. Behold the wretch, who, desperate of thy love,
In jealous madness gave the fatal blow:
A wretch, that to possess once more thy love,
Wou'd with the blood of millions stain her soul.

Al. To dungeons, tortures, drag her from my sight.

Sta. My soul is on the wing. O come, my lord,
Haste to my arms, and take a last farewell.
Thus let me die. Oh! Oh!

Al. Look up my love.

O Heav'n! and will you, will you take her from me!

Sta. Farewel my most lov'd lord: ah me, farewell.
Yet, ere I die, grant this request.

Al. O speak,

That I may execute before I follow thee. [*Spare,*

Sta. Leave not the world till Heav'n demands you.
Roxana's life. 'Twas love of you that caus'd
The death she gave me. And, O! some times think
Amidst your revels, think on your poor queen;
And, ere the cheareful bowl salute your lips,
Enrich it with a tear, and I am happy. [*Dies.*

Al. Yet, ere thou takes thy flight—She's gone, she's
gone.

All, all is hush'd, no music now is heard;
The roses wither; and the fragrant breath
The wak'd their sweets, shall never wake 'em more.

Ro. Weep not, my lord! no sorrow can recal her,
O! turn your eyes, and, in Roxana's arms
You'll find fond love, and everlasting truth.

Al. Hence from my sight, and thank my dear Statira,

That yet thou art alive.

R. O! take me to your arms.

In spite of all your cruelty, I love you :

Yes, thus I'll fasten on your sacred robe ;

Thus, on my knees, for ever cling around thee,

'Till you forgive me, or till death divide us.

Al. Hence, fury, hence : there's not a glance of thine
But, like a basilisk, comes wing'd with death.

Ra. O! speak not thus, to one who kneels for mercy.
Think for whose sake it was I madly plung'd
Into a crime abhorrent to my nature.

Al. Off, murd'rese, off! for ever shun my sight ;
My eyes detest thee, for thy soul is ruin.

Ra. Barbarian! yes, I will for ever shun thee.
Repeated injuries have steel'd my heart,
And I cou'd curse myself for being kind.
If there is any majesty above,

That has revenge in store for perjur'd love,

Send Heav'n the swiftest ruin on his head!

Strike the destroyer! lay the victor dead!

Kill the triumpher! and avenge my wrong!

In height of pomp, while he is warm and young,

Bolted with thunder, let him rush along.

But what are curses? Curses will not kill,

Nor ease the tortures, I am doom'd to feel.

[*Exit.*

Enter Eumenes

Eum. Pardon, dread sir, a fatal messenger.

The royal Sifigambis is no more.

Struck with the horror of Statira's fate,

She soon expired, and, with the latest breath,

Left Parisatis to Lyfimachus.

But what I fear most depely will affect you,

Your lov'd Hephestion's—

Al. Dead! then he is blest!

But here, here lies my fate. Hephestion, Clytus!

My victories all for ever folded up

In this dear body. Here my banner' lost,

My standard's triumphs gone. I shall run mad!

Go, for the monument of this lov'd creature,

Root up these bowers, and pave 'em all with gold.

Draw dry the Ganges, make the Indies poor,

To deck her tomb: no shrine nor altar spare,

But strip the pomp from gods to place it there.

[*Exit cum suis.*

Enter Cassander.

Cas. He's gone—but whither?—follow Theffalus,

Attend his steps, and let him know what passes.

[*Exit Thef.*]

Vengeance lie still, thy cravings shall be sated,
Death roams at large, the furies are unchain'd,
And murder plays her master-piece.

Enter Polyperchon.

Saw you the king? he parted hence this moment.

Pol. Yes; with disorder'd wildness in his looks,
He rush'd along, till, with a casual glance,
He saw me where I stood: then stepping short,
Draw near, he cry'd—and grasp'd my hand in his,
Where more than fevers rag'd in ev'ry vein.
O Polyperchon! I have lost my queen!
Statira's dead!—and as he spoke, the tears
Gush'd from his eyes—I more than felt his pains.

Enter Theffalus.

Thef. Hence, hence, away!

Cas. Where is he Theffalus?

Thef. I left him circled by a crowd of princes.
The poison tears him with that height of horror,
Ev'n I could pity him—he call'd the chiefs;
Embrac'd 'em round—then, starting from amid' st em,
Cried out, I come—'twas Ammon's voice; I know it—
Father, I come; but let me, ere I go,
Dispatch the business of a kneeling world.

Pol. No more; I hear him—we must meet anon.

Cas. In Saturn's field—there give a loose to rapture,
Enjoy the tempest we, ourselves, have rais'd,
And triumph in the wreck which crowns our vengeance.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE. *the palace.*

Alexander, with his hair dishevelled, Lyfimachus, Eumenes, Perdicas, and attendants.

Al. Search there; nay, probe me, search my wounded
reins—

Pull, draw it out.

Lyf. We have search'd, but find no hurt,

Al. O! I am stor, a forked burning arrow
Sicks cross my shoulders; the sad venom flies
Like lightning thro' my flesh, my blood, my marrow.

Lyf. How fierce his fever!

Al. Ha! what a change of torments I endure!
A bolt of ice runs hailing thro' my bowels;
'Tis, sure, the arm of death; give me a chair;
Cover me, for I freeze, and my teeth chatter,

And

And my knees knock together.

Eum. Have mercy Heaven?

Al. Ha! who talks of Heaven?

I am all hell; I burn, I burn again;
The war grows wond'rous hot; hey for the Tygris!
Bear me, Bucephalus, amongst the billows.

[*Jumps into the chair.*]

O 'tis a noble beast; I would not change him
For the best horse the sun has in his stable;
For they are hot, their mangers full of coals;
Their manes are flakes of lightning, curls of fire;
And their red tails like meteors whistle about.

Lys. Help all; Eumenes, help.

Al. Ha, ha, ha! I shall die with laughter.
Parmenio, Clytus, do you see yon fellow,
That ragged soldier, that poor tatter'd Greek!
See how he puts to flight the gaudy Persians,
With nothing but a rusty helmet on, thro' which
The grisly bristles of his pushing beard
Drive 'em like pikes—ha! ha! ha!

Per. How wild he talks!

Lys. Yet warring in his wildness.

Al. Sound, sound, keep your ranks close; ay, now
they come;

O the brave din, the noble clank of arms!
Charge, charge apace, and let the phalanx move:
Darius comes——ay, 'tis Darius;
I see, I know him by the sparkling plumes,
And his gold chariot drawn by ten white horses.
But, like a tempest, thus I pour upon him—
He bleeds; with that last blow I brought him down;
He tumbles, take him, snatch the imperial crown.
They fly, they fly; follow, follow—Victoria,
Victoria, Victoria— [Leaps into the soldiers arms.

Per. Let's bear him safely to his bed.

Al. Ha! the least motion gives me sudden death;
My vital spirits are quite parch'd, burnt up,
And all my smoky entrails turn'd to ashes.

Lys. When you, the brightest star that ever shone,
Shall set, it must be night with us for ever.

Al. Let me embrace you all, before I die.

[*Al. kneels and weeps.*]

Weep not my dear companions, the good gods
Shall send ye in my stead a noble prince;
One that shall lead ye forth with matchless conduct.

Lys.

ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

43

Lyf. Break not our hearts with such unkind expressions.

Per. We will not part with you, nor change for Mars.

Al. Perdicas, take this ring,

And see me laid in the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Lyf. To whom does your dread majesty bequeath
The empire of the world?

Al. To him that is most worthy.

Per. When will you, sacred sir, that we should give
To your great memory those divine honours
Which such exalted virtue does deserve?

Al. When you are most happy, and in peace.
Your hands—O Father, if I have discharg'd
The duty of a man to empire born;
If by unwearied toil I have deserv'd
The vast renown of thy adopted son,
Accept this soul which thou didst first inspire,
And which this sigh thus gives thee back again. [*Dies.*]

Lyf. There fell the pride and glory of the war.
If there be treason let us find it out;
Lyfimachus stands forth to lead you on;
And swears, by these most honour'd dear remains,
He will not taste those joys which beauty brings,
Until he has reveng'd the best of kings. [*Exeunt.*]

T H E E N D.



